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Post Publishes Excerpts From Pentagon Study

The United States "did not—as is often alleged—connive with (Ngo Dinh) Diem to ignore" the Vietnam elections provided for in the Geneva Accords of 1954, according to sections of a secret Pentagon study appearing in the Washington Post.

The Post began a series of articles from the massive Defense Department study of U.S. involvement in Indochina, which it said was "made available" to the paper. There was no indication of the scope or source.

The material in the first Post article primarily covers years of the Eisenhower administration and shows the concern with the possibility of Communist domination of Southeast Asia.

The bulk of the materials in the Post was treated only cursorily in the Times's reports, which dealt primarily with American policy under the Johnson administration. Three articles of a seven-part series appeared in The Times before it was temporarily enjoined by a federal judge from continuing publication.

No Comment at Justice

A Justice Department spokesman said today the agency will not comment on the Post publication of material from the 47-volume, 2.5-million word study "until our lawyers have a chance to look at it." The Justice Department has contended that publication by the Times is detrimental to national interests.

The Post's executive editor, Benjamin C. Bradlee, said today, "We carefully examined all the material available to us and concluded that we have an obligation to our readers to publish the story. It contains important information on the history of our involvement in Vietnam, and in

our opinion, it does not reveal information which could be used to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of any foreign nation."

According to the Post article, the U.S., although initially opposing the elections to determine the future of Vietnam, did expect them to be held and "up until May 1955 had fully supported them."

However, the U.S. "shifted its position in the face of Diem's opposition, and of the evidence then accumulated about the oppressive nature of the regime in North Vietnam."

Action in China

Earlier, as the Geneva Convention was opening, the United States had actively considered the possibility of military intervention in Vietnam, where Ho Chi Minh's forces were battering the French. This has been known for years.

Initial American actions would be to help the French by expediting and if necessary increasing aid against the Viet Minh.